

HB 707 with HCA 1 -- SAFE SLEEP PRACTICES

SPONSOR: Kirkton

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with Amendments" by the Standing Committee on Children and Families by a vote of 9 to 0.

This bill authorizes the Department of Health and Senior Services to approve training concerning the safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The bill requires all licensed child care facilities that provide care for children less than one year of age to implement and maintain a written safe sleep policy in accordance with the most recent safe sleep recommendations of the academy.

When an infant requires alternative sleep positions or special sleeping arrangements, the facility must be provided with written instructions, signed by the infant's licensed health care provider, detailing the alternative sleep positions or special sleeping arrangements for the infant. The facility must put the infant to sleep in accordance with the written instructions.

All employees of licensed child care facilities who care for infants less than one year of age are required to successfully complete department-approved training on the most recent safe sleep recommendations of the academy every three years.

The department must establish rules that include:

- (1) Amending any current rules which are not in compliance with the most recent recommendations of the academy, including the rule that permits the use of bumper pads in cribs or playpens;
- (2) Keeping soft or loose bedding away from sleeping infants and out of safe sleep environments; and
- (3) Prohibiting blankets or other soft or loose bedding from being hung on the sides of cribs.

The department may adopt emergency rules to implement these requirements.

The bill contains an emergency clause.

HCA 1: Changes "prevents the occurrence" to "reduces the risk" and removes the reference of the rule that permits the use of bumper pads in cribs or playpens

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill is in honor of Owen Haber, a seven month old infant who died due to unsafe sleep practices. Currently, there are no requirements for safe sleep practices or training regarding safe sleep practices for day care centers in Missouri. It is time to update Missouri's standards to reflect best practices regarding safe infant sleep. The use of blankets, bumpers, and toys in a crib while an infant is sleeping drastically increases the instances of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Studies have found that 40% of babies who died of SIDS had an abnormality in the portion of their brain that controls breathing. These infants are more susceptible to SIDS, especially when they are also experiencing unsafe sleep practices. The United States ranks first in infant mortality out of all industrialized nations, and a high percentage of infant deaths are attributable to unsafe sleep practices. Thirty percent of infant deaths occur when a baby is not with his or her mother. Kansas requires license childcare facilities to retrain on safe sleep practices each time their license is renewed, which would be easy to implement in Missouri as well.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Kirkton; Lori Behrens, SIDS Resources; Missouri Children's Leadership Council; Aaron Haber; Anna Haber; Lutheran Family and Children's Services of Missouri; Missouri Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; Amy Licis; and Regina Weir, Safe Kids KC-Mother and Child Health Coalition.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.